Reckoning of the Half-Divine

When mortals are suddenly imbued with immense power, it goes off the rails immediately

PITCH

One day, certain individuals woke up to a quite unexpected surprise — they had been bestowed immense power and nigh immortality with no explanation whatsoever. It's been attributed to an act of the Gods, as their power is beyond and unlike anything we've ever seen, even in a world of heroes and magic such as our own. The Day of the Divine, or D Day, is how we know it now, and the newly-powerful are known as Faint Divinities — what would follow would be the very antithesis of divine, however.

Only a year later, these Faint Divinities have completely overturned the social order, toppled nations, committed atrocities, scorched the earth, and become petty tyrants, capriciously wielding their godlike powers like a toddler kicking down woodblock towers and laughing at how they fall.

Most mere mortals have chosen to keep their heads down and pray, though it seems to have done them little good. The Faint Divinities are each too powerful to confront head on and have convinced the people that they are immortal — though *you* know that this is not, strictly speaking, the truth. Everyone, everything has a weakness. It may be jealously guarded and spoken to no one, but it's there.
You know because you've seen one of them bleed. And if they can bleed, they can die.

As a player in a Reckoning of the Half Divine campaign, your character will have experienced the tragic outcome of an interaction with a Faint Divinity firsthand, and have devoted yourself to taking them down. You will have to plan carefully, research your targets, and exploit every weakness and edge to your advantage in order to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds.

CONCEPT

It's basically a High Fantasy "The Reckoners" / "The Boys" — power corrupts, and complete power corrupts completely, so now you must become the object of their reckoning in order to restore the balance

AIM

A kind of "Monster of the Week" style campaign where the PCs play powerful but mortal characters trying to strike down far more powerful adversaries designed through collaborative worldbuilding and storytelling

TONE/FEEL

Dangerous, Heroic, Precarious, Triumphant, Tragic, Hopeful

THEMES

David vs Goliath, Power Corrupts, The Pen/Brain is Mightier, Planning and Execution, The Best Laid Plans, Petty Kings, Kill Your Heroes, Hunter Becomes Hunted, Pandora's Box

TOUCHSTONES

The Reckoners, The Boys, My Hero Academia, Monster of the Week, Monster Hunter, Shadows of Mordor

PLAYER QUESTIONS

- What super-powered tyrant now rules over your homeland?
- What did they take from you? What was left behind?
- How did you escape with your life?
- You saw a Faint Divinity bleed — what were the circumstances at the time, and what is your theory as to their weakness?
- What event or circumstance brought you and your fellow Reckoners together?

GM GUIDANCE & SECRETS

HOW TO RUN A RECKONING

- GM should mine character's backstory questions for potential targets that are causing issues in the current region, or ask the players to pitch ideas of threats that their characters have heard rumors of. In any event, the main threats should be collaboratively designed, and then the GM should show narratively why they absolutely must be dealt with.
- Each target should represent a significant threat (a Tier above the players) that would probably be a death sentence head-on, but given exploitable weaknesses that brings them down within striking distance of the PCs
- Lower level threats should have more weaknesses that are likely easy to discover, higher level threats should have relatively few weaknesses and require an investment of time and effort to learn
- The players can go on minor adventures to discover weaknesses, collect necessary tools or resources or allies, and prepare for a confrontation
- It should run more or less like a Heist but with an Assassination at the end rather than a vault of treasure
- GM is encouraged to reward the PC's being prepared and allow them to "get one over" on you, but also throw complications and twists into the confrontation. You are aiming to create "Oh Shit" moments when something doesn't go *quite* to plan, and the PCs have to improvise and adapt in order to overcome significant odds. Fear results and Failures will give you opportunities to throw a wrench in things, you should have a wrench or two at the ready for when that happens
- Each victory against a Faint Divinity should be hard fought and feel well-earned, like the PCs were only able to be successful because they were well-prepared and adapted to changing circumstances. A plan is necessary, but it only gets you halfway there

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

- In the beginning, there were only Gods in their Immortal Realm Beyond
- Each god had virtually omnipotent power within their domain to create anything they could imagine
- They quickly grew bored
- Thus, the Realms of Mortals were created as entertainment for the Gods
- In the early days of the Realms of Mortals, Gods would freely interfere with peoples lives, bestowing power and artifacts, guiding the acts of individuals and shaping the destiny of entire nations and cultures, often with disastrous outcomes
- Being immortal and nigh omnipotent, conflicts between gods could not happen directly. Instead, the capricious Gods played out their conflicts vicariously by destroying each others' toys and projects in the Realms

- One god would drive men to create a beautiful, utopian city. Their jealous brother might then raise a dreadful army to destroy it
- After an all-out war nearly destroyed the Realms, the Gods agreed on a Pact of Non-interference — and so became known as the Forgotten Gods, their direct influence over the realms felt only through stories passed down from times of old, and forgotten relics imbued with a tiny fraction their power
- Until now. Something has changed, and the Gods influence is being felt in our Realms again in the form of Faint Divinities, individuals who seem to have been blessed by a God and imbued with some of the God's power
- It's not going well. Turns out demi-godlike power can be pretty corrupting, and most of them are acting badly

WHAT'S HAPPENING BEHIND THE SCENES?

- One of the Gods successfully argued in the Divine Court that, upon close reading of the Pact, they are only forbidden from interfering with the wills of mortals and from creating new artifacts or influencing the outcomes of events, but this doesn't *necessarily* prevent them from imbuing people with godlike powers. The thought being that careful choice of who to empower could allow them to regain some of their influence over events in the Realms, while respecting the free will of mortals.
- Not everyone on the Divine Court agreed, it was highly controversial and ended up being a narrow majority decision.
- So that's how it came to pass that Gods began imbuing individuals with divine powers, but asking nothing of them in return.
- They did their best to choose individuals whom they thought would further their agendas, but in the end you just never really know who someone will become when they receive godlike powers over night.
- Quickly realizing the error of their ways, the decision was reversed, but not before numerous individuals were imbued with divine power
- The renewed Pact of Non-interference prevents the Gods from ANY further meddling, including the retraction of powers given
- So the mortals will just have to learn to live with it, or do something about it
- On the bright side, the Realms of Mortals has been great entertainment lately, viewers agree that the Faint Divinities have really shaken up a tired format and brought forth a lot of interesting, emergent narratives